

The President's Daily Brief

13 February 1970

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FOR THE PRESIDENT ONLY

THE PRESIDENT'S DAILY BRIEF

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PRINCIPAL DEVELOPMENTS

Jordan's King Husayn failed to use his military muscle against the fedayeen [REDACTED]

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In Laos, government forces are being pushed back.
(Page 2)

France's willingness to supply spare parts for Israel's Mirage aircraft is just about the last bargaining point left between the two countries. (Page 3)

Nasir probably will seek the maximum propaganda advantage in deciding whether to retaliate for the bombing raid which killed or wounded many civilians.
(Page 4)

Nigerian efforts to combat malnutrition and other problems in the eastern region are showing limited success in spite of organizational deficiencies.
(Page 5)

Philippine students are not too eager to accept the US as a substitute target for their protests. (Page 6)

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JORDAN

After a series of meetings, King Husayn and fedayeen leaders announced an agreement to "cease all provocative acts" and to "suspend all measures ...causing tension." The city of Amman is now quiet, and representatives of the fedayeen and the government are beginning discussions on a new arrangement for coexisting with minimum conflict.

Husayn seems to have [redacted] lost another battle with the fedayeen. The King's reluctance to use the troops he had standing by in and near the capital avoided serious bloodshed. [redacted]

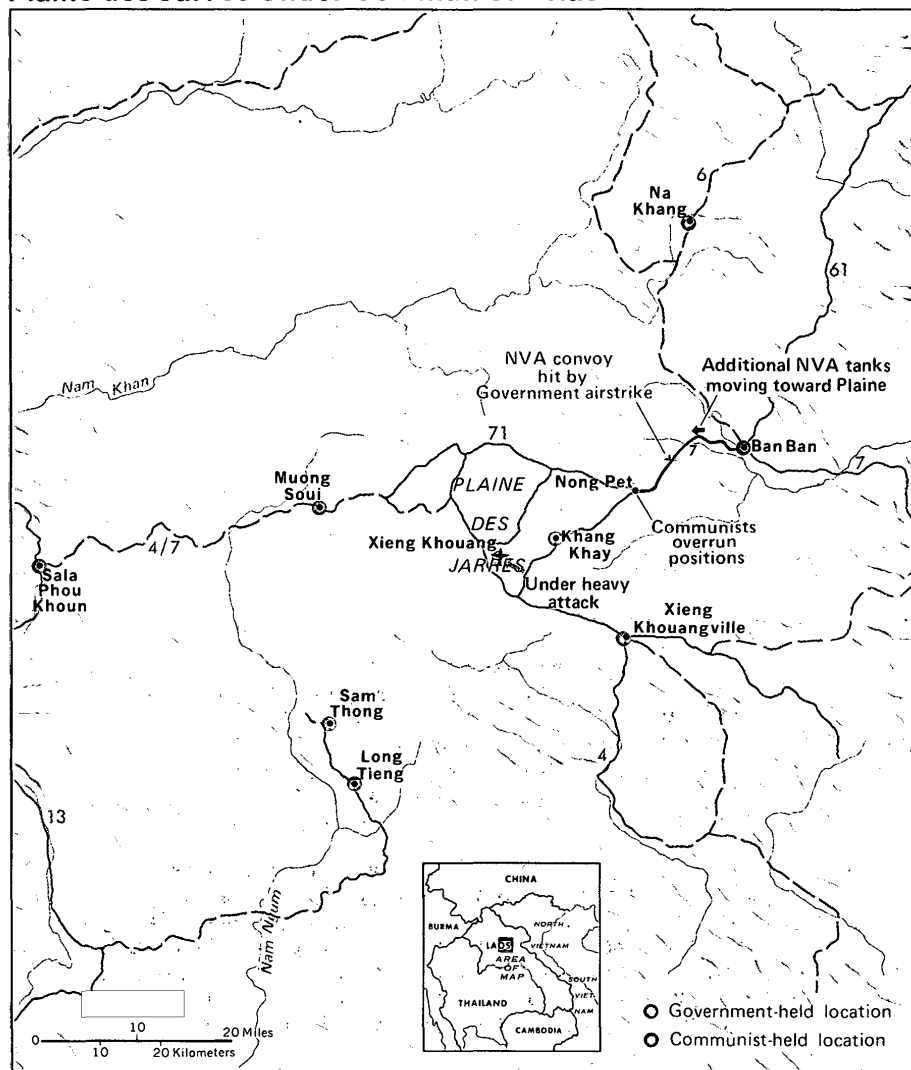
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Plaine des Jarres Under Communist Attack



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LAOS

Government forces are withdrawing from positions east of the Plaine des Jarres as the Communist counteroffensive continues to gain momentum.

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[REDACTED]

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Vang Pao's troops have been under mounting pressure. [REDACTED]

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[REDACTED]

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Vang Pao's general strategy--inflicting maximum casualties while suffering as few casualties as possible--appears to have been successful for the most part. The Communists seem prepared to buy ground dearly, however, and will keep up the pressure on Vang Pao and his weary men.

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FRANCE-ISRAEL

In a recent conversation with Ambassador Shriver and Congressman Hays, French Prime Minister Chaban-Delmas stated that France had delivered 200 tons of Mirage spare parts to Israel last year and that France intended to continue to supply Mirage parts in amounts required for "normal upkeep and maintenance." He said, however, that if there are major anti-French demonstrations when Pompidou visits the US later this month, France would consider embargoing all future parts shipments.

Chaban said he had called in leaders of the French Jewish community and advised them to send emissaries to the US to convince leaders of the American Jewish community that it was in their interest to treat Pompidou "properly" during the visit. He did not intend, he said, to let the French be "kicked in the groin" over this matter.

Congressman Hays expressed some doubt that sending emissaries would be effective in calming American Jews. Chaban said that might be right, but at least the French would have made the effort.

Chaban is concerned primarily with defusing potential criticism of French Middle East policy.

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EGYPT-ISRAEL

Cairo has claimed some 70 persons killed and almost 100 wounded in yesterday's attack on a steel rod factory some ten miles north of Cairo.

Israeli radio subsequently announced that there had been no change in Tel Aviv's policy of hitting only military targets, and that if a civilian target had been struck it was "the result of a mistake."

It is not clear how much pressure will be exerted on Nasir to retaliate for the Israeli raid. He had previously indicated that if a raid caused a large number of civilian casualties, he would feel compelled to strike Israeli civilian targets no matter what the price. Nasir may decide against retaliation for now, however, because his defenses are so weak. He may choose instead to exploit the bad publicity Israel will receive, probably hoping that this will somehow increase the pressure on Israel to cease its attacks.

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NIGERIA

The federal government's reconciliation policy is off to a good start, and the occupation of the former Biafran territory has gone well thus far. Earlier troop discipline problems have been overcome.

the Easterners have generally been reassured by the conduct of the federal troops and have been fraternizing freely with the occupying soldiers. The Ibos' willingness to forget the past so quickly probably is one of the results of the government's massive relief program.

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Malnutrition and suffering have been severe, however. Relief operations are improving, but distribution of food still is not well organized. Another major problem in the former enclave is the virtually complete lack of Nigerian currency in the hands of the people. Federal officials are working out the details of a currency exchange, which is scheduled to get under way tomorrow.

Many minority tribesmen in eastern Nigeria and some elements in Gowon's government believe that too much is being done for the Ibos. Probably in part as a concession to these elements, Lagos has established a military tribunal to screen former secessionist army officers who are seeking reinstatement in the Nigerian Army. The tribunal presumably will decide which officers were "misguided" into secession and which were the "misguiders," but there are no indications that a large-scale purge is in the offing.

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PHILIPPINES

President Marcos' aides have been working on student leaders to guide their protests away from the government's inattention to domestic programs and toward a charge of US interference in the country.

The shouting of a few anti-US slogans during the generally peaceful demonstrations yesterday suggests that this ploy has had only limited success thus far. The thrust of the demonstrations was still against Marcos.

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NOTE

UN-Suez: Stepped-up fighting along the Suez Canal is exposing the 100 observers of the UN truce supervision organization to increasing hazards. Five of the original 18 observation posts have now been closed, the latest as a result of an Egyptian bombing attack on 6 February that injured two observers and an Israeli liaison officer.

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